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U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Public Affairs

USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE FOR UPLAND COTTON

WASHINGTON, Aug. 22—John Stevenson, acting executive vice president of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation, today announced the prevailing world market price, adjusted to U.S. quality and location (adjusted world price), for Strict Low Middling (SLM) 1-1/16 inch (micronaire 3.5-3.6 and 4.3-4.9, strength 24-25 grams per tex) upland cotton (base quality) and the coarse count adjustment in effect from 12:01 a.m. Friday, Aug. 23, through midnight Thursday, Aug. 29.

The Agricultural Act of 1949, as amended, provides that the adjusted world price (AWP) may be further adjusted if: (a) the AWP is less than 115 percent of the current crop year loan rate for base quality upland cotton, and (b) the Friday through Thursday average price quotation for the lowest-priced U.S. growth as quoted for Middling (M) 1-3/32 inch cotton, C.I.F. northern Europe (U.S. Northern Europe price) exceeds the Northern Europe price. The maximum allowable adjustment is the difference between the U.S. Northern Europe price and the Northern Europe price.

Based on data for the week ending Aug. 22, a further adjustment to this week's calculated AWP may be made in accordance with this provision. The calculated AWP is 109.79 percent of the 1991 upland cotton base quality loan rate, and the U.S. Northern Europe price exceeds the Northern Europe price by 2.03 cents per pound. Below are the relevant calculations.

I.	Calculated AWP	55.74 cents per pound
	1991 Base Loan Rate	50.77 cents per pound
	AWP as a Percent of Loan Rate	109.79
II.	U.S. Northern Europe Price	74.20 cents per pound
	Northern Europe Price	-72.17 cents per pound
	Maximum Adjustment Allowed	2.03 cents per pound

Based on a consideration of the U.S. share of world exports, the current level of cotton export sales and cotton export shipments, and other relevant data, a further adjustment to this week's calculated AWP equal to 2.03 cents per pound will be made.

Based on data for the week ending Aug. 22, the AWP for base quality upland cotton and the coarse count adjustment are determined as follows:

Adjusted World Price

Northern Europe Price	72.17
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Adjustments:

Average U.S. spot market location	14.18
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SLM 1-1/16 inch cotton	1.90
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Average U.S. location	0.35
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Sum of Adjustments	<u>-16.43</u>
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Calculated AWP	55.74
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Further AWP adjustment	<u>- 2.03</u>
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ADJUSTED WORLD PRICE	53.71 cents/lb.
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Coarse Count Adjustment

Northern Europe Price	72.17
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Northern Europe Coarse Count Price	<u>-69.75</u>
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2.42

Adjustment to SLM 1-1/32 inch cotton	<u>-4.20</u>
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-1.78

COARSE COUNT ADJUSTMENT	0 cents/lb.
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Since the AWP is above the 1989, 1990 and 1991 crop base quality loan rates of 50.00, 50.27 and 50.77 cents per pound, respectively, the loan repayment rates for the 1989, 1990 and 1991 crops of upland cotton during this period are equal to the respective loan rates, adjusted for the specific quality and location, plus any applicable interest and charges.

The AWP will continue to be used to determine the value of upland cotton that is obtained in exchange for commodity certificates. Because the AWP in effect is above the established loan rate, loan deficiency payments are not available for 1991-crop upland cotton during this period.

The next AWP and coarse count adjustment announcement will be made on Thursday, Aug. 29.

Charles Cunningham (202) 447-7954
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OLD ENEMIES CATCHING UP WITH ALIEN BUGS AND WEEDS

WASHINGTON, Aug. 22—Bugs that are potential enemies of weed and insect pests in this country arrived in record numbers last year from U.S. Department of Agriculture laboratories overseas.

Scientists at overseas labs of USDA's Agricultural Research Service shipped an estimated 402,766 pest-fighting insects and mites in 1990, said Richard Soper, who heads the agency's research program on natural pest controls.

"Most crop-damaging insects and weeds in the United States came from somewhere else, but left their natural enemies behind. We want to turn the tables on the pests by bringing their worst adversaries to this country," said Soper, based in Beltsville, Md.

Soper said the agency is importing bugs to target more than two dozen U.S. weed and insect pests. "We're also importing beneficial microorganisms, such as bacteria and fungi, and testing native biocontrol agents," he said.

Once here, the imported bugs are sent to many ARS laboratories around the country and to universities and state agencies for lab and field studies by scientists. Promising biocontrols are released in pilot tests and made available to government, university and commercial insectaries that rear them for researchers and growers.

Soper said the imported bug numbers, increasing in recent years, reflect growing demand for biological alternatives to pesticides. "More commercial firms sell beneficial insects now," he said, "and more garden and hardware stores stock natural bacteria and fungi to attack insect pests."

Many insects and weeds are becoming resistant to pesticides, he said. Some chemicals may pollute groundwater or kill bees and other beneficial insects, and are suspected of causing problems with food safety.

Almost half the agency's biocontrol imports in 1990 were 191,000 Asian Ageniaspis fuscicollis wasps collected and shipped by ARS

scientists in South Korea. The tiny wasp kills apple ermine moths, which invaded western Washington State in 1985. The wasp does not sting people or animals.

Soper said the moth could become a serious pest in eastern Washington, where most of the state's apple crop grows. ARS scientists have released many of the wasps to see whether they can become established there.

Import numbers don't tell the whole story, he noted. "Having a few good bugs may turn out to be more valuable for biocontrol than hundreds of thousands less effective ones," he said. An example may be the few hundred parasites of the gypsy moth shipped last year from the South Korean lab—the Asian Parasite Laboratory in Seoul.

"Those gypsy moth parasites, while far less abundant than the Ageniaspis wasp, may have a higher payoff in controlling pests," he said.

Nearly all the agency's imported biocontrols are collected by ARS researchers based at labs in Argentina, Australia, France, Italy and South Korea. Others are found by ARS researchers and cooperating scientists who travel from their U.S. labs to countries such as China and the Soviet Union.

Jim De Quattro (301) 344-3648

#

USDA SETTLES FIVE ANIMAL WELFARE ACT COMPLIANCE CASES

WASHINGTON, Aug. 22—The U.S. Department of Agriculture settled five cases between March 21 and April 20 to enforce the humane care and treatment of animals regulated under the Animal Welfare Act.

James W. Glosser, administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, said the cases resulted from earlier charges. Details are:

—Vada Schwindt of Plainview, Ark., has been disqualified from becoming licensed under the AWA and regulations for five years. Schwindt was also assessed a civil penalty of \$2,000 by an administrative law judge, \$1,500 of which is suspended if Schwindt does not violate the AWA or regulations for five years. The judge also ordered Schwindt to cease and desist from violating the AWA and in particular to refrain from

engaging in any activity for which a license is required under the AWA and regulations without being licensed. Vada Schwindt was first licensed as a dealer under the AWA in 1984 until her license was surrendered and canceled on Oct. 5, 1987. USDA charged that on 11 occasions between Dec. 24, 1987, and July 15, 1988, Vada Schwindt purchased and sold dogs to or from other dealers or for use as pets—a in violation of the AWA.

—John J. Santoro of Niles, Ill., doing business as Animal World, Inc., has agreed, without admitting or denying USDA charges, to an order by an administrative law judge to cease and desist from future violations of the AWA. Santoro was also ordered to refrain for three years from engaging in any activity for which a license is required under the AWA. USDA alleged that on 10 occasions between Oct. 28, 1980, and May 26, 1987, Santoro failed to provide clean food and water; keep the buildings and grounds free of an accumulation of trash; and provide structurally sound, sanitary enclosures and premises in good repair with sufficient space and ventilation for the animals.

—Timothy Bruner, an exhibitor from Austin, Texas, was assessed a civil penalty of \$3,000 and ordered to cease and desist from future violations of the AWA by an administrative law judge. Bruner's license was suspended for one year and thereafter until he demonstrates to APHIS that he is in full compliance with the AWA and its regulations and standards. The judge also issued a cease and desist order to settle USDA charges that Bruner failed to furnish information requested by APHIS; failed to make his premises available for inspection by APHIS; and failed to handle animals in a careful manner. USDA alleged that on March 6, 1989, Bruner failed to securely confine a leopard, thus allowing it to escape. Additionally, on March 8 and March 20, 1989, Bruner refused to permit APHIS employees to conduct a complete inspection of his animal facilities and refused to disclose to APHIS investigators the location of a jaguar and a leopard that he had removed from his premises.

—Bruce Barnfield of Crocker, Mo., had his license suspended for one year through May 1, 1992, by an administrative law judge. Barnfield has agreed, without admitting or denying allegations, to the issuance of a cease and desist order to settle USDA charges that he operated his dealership below standards prescribed by the AWA. USDA charged that on eight occasions between Aug. 19, 1987, and April 19, 1989, Barnfield failed to individually identify dogs; provide adequate shelter for dogs kept

outdoors; keep food and water receptacles clean and in good repair; maintain clean and sanitary conditions within the primary enclosures; keep the premises clean, sanitized and in good repair; and provide primary enclosures constructed and maintained so as to allow each animal to turn about freely and to easily stand, sit and lie in a comfortable position.

—Jay Farkas of Fargo, N.D., has agreed to pay a \$1,000 civil penalty and to cease and desist from future violations of the AWA. An administrative law judge issued a cease and desist order to settle USDA charges that Farkas failed to provide adequate temperature control for animals in holding and transportation. The judge further ordered Farkas to cease and desist from operating as a carrier or intermediate handler of animals without being registered.

The AWA requires that the care and treatment of certain animals be provided according to standards established by APHIS. Animals protected by the law must be provided adequate housing, handling, sanitation, food, water, transportation, veterinary care and protection against extremes of weather and temperature. The regulations also provide for the exercise of dogs and a physical environment adequate to promote the psychological well-being of nonhuman primates. The law covers animals that are sold as pets at the wholesale level, used for biomedical research or used for exhibition purposes.

APHIS enforces the AWA primarily by conducting inspections and through administrative prosecutions when warranted. Many of these cases are resolved through the consent decision provision of the regulations. Under these provisions, USDA and the respondent named in the complaint agree to a hearing before an administrative law judge, who issues a decision. Any party may appeal this decision to the USDA judicial officer. The respondent may appeal an adverse decision by the judicial officer to the U.S. Court of Appeals. Failure to respond to the charges in the complaint results in the issuance of a default order by the administrative law judge who assesses penalties.

Animal dealers, breeders, brokers, transportation companies, exhibitors and research facilities must be licensed or registered. APHIS employees make periodic, unannounced inspections to insure compliance. Action is taken against violators if efforts to secure compliance are unsuccessful.

Robin Brown (301) 436-4898

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GLOBAL CHANGE: A CATALYST FOR HYDROLOGIC SCIENCE

WASHINGTON, Aug. 23—The current structure of hydrological science and its supporting research grant program does not provide for a coherent understanding of water's complex role in the planetary environment, according to Peter S. Eagleson, who will present the U.S. Department of Agriculture's 1991 Sterling B. Hendricks Memorial Lecture.

Eagleson, a professor of civil engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, will speak Aug. 27 in New York at the annual meeting of the American Chemical Society, which co-sponsors the lecture.

USDA's Agricultural Research Service established the lecture series in 1981 as a tribute to Sterling Brown Hendricks (1902-1981). He is best known as one of the leaders of the ARS group which discovered and characterized phytochrome, the pigment considered the universal regulator in plants.

Hendricks's research also included work on the nature of the hydrogen bond, the structural properties of clays, the physiochemical aspects of solids, the nature of bone, the synthesis of waxes and rubbers in plants, and the mechanism of salt uptake by plants.

Eagleson is the lead author of "Opportunities in the Hydrologic Sciences," an important reference work published in 1991 by the National Research Council, examining the state of hydrological science.

"In this report, Eagleson has set a program for redefining how hydrologic science is viewed," said ARS Administrator R. Dean Plowman.

Hydrologic science deals with the occurrence, distribution, circulation and properties of water on the earth.

Concern for hydrologic issues is now divided among traditional disciplines: ocean science, atmospheric science and solid earth science, Eagleson said.

"As a result, a distinct discipline with a clear identity and supporting programs has not developed," he said. "Nor has a coherent understanding of water's role on the planetary scale-environment developed."

While spending has been extensive to cope with the scarcities and excesses of water and to ensure its potability, relatively little has been invested in the basic science underlying water's many roles in the planetary mechanism, he added.

"The issues of global change have brought us to the realization that a comprehensive hydrologic science base is a necessity," Eagleson said.

Kim Kaplan (301) 344-4504

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FOREST SERVICE HOTLINE WILL ADVISE TRAVELERS ON FALL COLOR

WASHINGTON, Aug. 23—Beginning Sept. 19, travelers can call the Forest Service Fall Color Hotline at (202) 205-1780 for an update on peak color areas in national forests throughout the United States.

Stanley Krugman, director of Forest Management Research for the Forest Service, said late rains in parts of the eastern and western United States promise exciting tree color in those areas.

"Color changes are primarily brought on by increasing hours of darkness that accompany the fall season, but exact timing of peak color is also affected by cooler weather," said Krugman.

Why do leaves change color? Most autumn colors are in leaves even in the middle of summer, says Krugman, but they are masked by the green pigment chlorophyll. Chlorophyll captures sunlight and converts it to energy that plants use to manufacture simple sugars and starch for food.

"During the summer the tree continually replenishes its chlorophyll and the leaves remain green," says Krugman. "As autumn approaches, changes in daylight and temperature slow the tree's food production and the tree uses up its chlorophyll faster than it replaces it. As the chlorophyll decreases, so does the green color, allowing other pigments that were hidden by the greenness to show through."

Carotenoids—the same pigments found in carrots and bananas—give hickory, aspen and birch leaves their yellow, brown and orange colors. A class of pigments called anthocyanins provide the less bountiful reds and purples of autumn. The two pigment types combine to create the deep orange, fiery red and bronze hues in hardwood forests of dogwood, sumac and oak.

The Forest Service encourages people to incorporate leaf watching with other activities in the National Forest System, such as visiting scenic byways, examining historical locations, and viewing wildlife.

"With over 191 million acres of national forest in the United States, there is bound to be something of beauty for everyone this fall on these lands," Krugman said.

Karen Harp (202) 205-0914

#

SPECIAL RULES FOR DISASTER LEASE AND TRANSFER OF BURLEY TOBACCO QUOTAS

WASHINGTON, Aug. 23—Keith Bjerke, administrator of the U.S. Department Agriculture's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, said today that burley tobacco producers who want to lease and transfer their unused quotas to another farm because of a natural disaster must comply with special rules governing these provisions.

"Producers must file an application for disaster credit with the county ASCS office, before the crop is harvested, and when it is expected that production may be less than 80 percent of the effective farm quota," Bjerke said.

A county ASCS office representative will visit each farm to verify loss of production, except when the disaster is widespread and well known in the county.

Bjerke said the producer must also pay for the costs of the compliance visit. "However, this payment will be refunded if the farm visit reveals the crop was cared for in a workmanlike manner, that sufficient acreage had been planted to produce the farm's effective quota under normal growing conditions, and that reduction of crop expectancy is due to a natural disaster and no other cause."

Bjerke said filing of the lease and transfer agreement after the crop had been harvested has made it difficult for the ASC county committee to determine whether the loss had actually been due to a natural disaster and whether reasonable and customary efforts had been made by the producer to produce an effective quota.

"There were indications that some producers leased a quota to a farm before July 1 when the lease price is at a seasonal low, intending to lease it away from the farm under the disaster provision during the marketing season, at a much higher lease price," said Bjerke. "These changes are necessary to prevent abuses and preserve the integrity of the program."

"These are reasonable steps," Bjerke concluded. "They will help

retain public trust in the program and ensure that all burley tobacco producers are treated fairly."

Burley tobacco producers should contact their county Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service office for further information.

Bruce Merkle (202) 447-8206

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USDA ANNOUNCES FINAL RULES FOR 1991 UPLAND COTTON PRICE SUPPORT PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Aug. 23—Keith Bjerke, executive vice president of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation, today announced final rules for the 1991 upland cotton price support program.

Bjerke said the rules, required by the 1990 Farm Bill, are unchanged from the proposed rules issued May 6, with one exception.

Parts 1427.5, 1427.7 and 1427.19 of Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations are amended to provide procedures for producers to designate an agent for the redemption of CCC price support loan collateral and for the extension of the maturity dates.

The final rules will be published in the Aug. 23 Federal Register.

Bruce Merkle (202) 447-8206

#

CHINESE PIGS WIN HIGH MARKS IN TASTE TESTS

WASHINGTON, Aug. 26—Pork from Chinese swine is just as tasty as meat from American pigs, U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists report.

That's the word from the United States' first comprehensive sensory panel tests on the meat from Chinese hogs, conducted by Agricultural Research Service scientists at the Roman L. Hruska U.S. Meat Animal Research Center (MARC) at Clay Center, Neb.

"You can sum it up in one sentence: There's no difference between the taste of Chinese pork and domestic pork," said ARS meat scientist Tommy L. Wheeler.

Three breeds of swine—Meishan, Fengjing and Minzhu—were imported from the People's Republic of China in 1989 for studies of their genetic potential to increase swine production in the United States.

Known for their prolificacy, the Chinese breeds average three to four more pigs per litter than U.S. breeds. Clay Center researchers are working to combine the increased litter size of Chinese pigs with the growth and meat production of domestic swine breeds to increase saleable lean meat.

"We're getting an idea of how much Chinese germ plasm is useful in a market hog to produce larger litters and still keep the taste consumers want," said Lawrence D. Young, a MARC geneticist on the Chinese swine project.

Boars from the three Chinese breeds and the domestic Duroc breed were mated to White composite females (equal parts of Landrace, Chester White, Yorkshire and Large White breeds).

A trained sensory panel found no difference in juiciness, amount of connective tissue, flavor intensity or tenderness of chops from the four breed cross groups, according to Wheeler.

The researchers also found that shear force values, an objective measure of tenderness, were the same for the breed crosses. Marbling of the Chinese-cross pork was slightly less than that of the Duroc cross, but not enough to affect juiciness or flavor. The fatter Chinese-sired pigs had about 17 percent less lean meat than Duroc-sired pigs.

"We expect Chinese-sired females to produce more pigs than Duroc-sired females," Young said. "What we ultimately have to do is find an economic balance between the amount of saleable lean meat and the number of pigs produced per litter."

Additional studies to further assess the potential of Chinese pigs in U.S. swine production are being done in cooperation with the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa.

Marci Gerriets (309) 685-4011

#

USDA PROTECTS 17 NEW PLANT VARIETIES

WASHINGTON, Aug. 26—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has issued certificates of protection to developers of 17 new varieties of seed-reproduced plants including cotton, lettuce, marigold, onion, pea, rape and safflower.

Kenneth H. Evans, of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said developers of the new varieties will have the exclusive right to reproduce, sell, import, and export their products in the United States for 18 years. Certificates of protection are granted after a review of the breeders' records and claims that each new variety is novel, uniform, and stable.

The following varieties have been issued certificates of protection:

- the Tamcot HQ95 variety of cotton, developed by the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station, College Station, Texas;
- the HS 23 variety of cotton, developed by the Helena Chemical Co., Memphis, Tenn.;
- the Kelvin and Esmeralda varieties of lettuce, developed by Royal Sluis B.V., Enkhuizen, the Netherlands;
- the Monarch variety of lettuce, developed by Bruce Church Inc., Salinas, Calif.;
- the Hero Orange variety of marigold, developed by the John Bodger & Sons Co., Lompoc, Calif.;
- the Everest variety of onion, developed by the Shamrock Seed Co., San Juan Bautista, Calif.;
- the Red Pinoy variety of onion, developed by Hortigen B.V., Enkhuizen, the Netherlands;
- the Sentry variety of pea, developed by Pure Line Seeds Inc., Moscow, Idaho;
- the Nordic variety of pea, developed by the Rogers NK Seed Co., Boise, Idaho;
- the Rebel, Cathy, Aspen, Humus, and LEI III varieties of rape, developed by the University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho;
- the Centennial variety of safflower, developed by Research and Development Institute Inc., Bozeman, Mont.; and
- the S-501 variety of safflower, developed by SeedTec International Inc., Woodland, Calif.

The certificates of protection for the Tamcot HQ95 cotton variety, the Rebel, Cathy, Aspen, Humus, and LEI III rape varieties, and the Centennial and S-501 safflower varieties are being issued to be sold by

variety name only as a class of certified seed, and to conform to the number of generations specified by the owners.

The plant variety protection program is administered by AMS and provides marketing protection to developers of new and distinctive seed-reproduced plants ranging from farm crops to flowers.

Rebecca Unkenholz (202) 447-8998

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MADIGAN ACCELERATES GSM-102 CREDITS TO USSR

WASHINGTON, Aug. 26—Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan today advanced \$315 million in scheduled credit guarantees to the Soviet Union under the U.S. Department of Agriculture's short-term credit guarantee program.

Madigan took this action following President George Bush's announcement earlier today that the United States would make this amount of credits immediately available to the USSR for the purchase of U.S. agricultural products.

In June, Bush announced a \$1.5 billion credit-guarantee package for the USSR under USDA's GSM-102 program. Of that amount, \$500 million had been scheduled to be made available on Oct. 1, and another \$400 million in February 1992. The \$315 million in credits awarded today represents an advance against these remaining credits. The decision affects the timing of the guarantees, but represents no change in the total amount available to the USSR under the package.

The Soviets had specifically requested the \$315 million amount of credits to be made available as soon as possible. "Our analysis confirms that there is need for additional imports between now and the completion of the Soviet harvest," Madigan said.

"I am pleased that the situation in the Soviet Union has allowed the President to accelerate these credits," said Madigan. "This action will benefit U.S. farmers in increased sales, and assist the Soviet people in their continuing efforts in democratization and establishing a free-market economy."

In fiscal-year terms, today's announcement increases the amount of GSM-102 credit guarantees available to the Soviet Union in fiscal 1991 from \$1.600 billion to \$1.915 billion.

This allocation shifts to fiscal 1991 a portion of the \$900 million in export credit guarantees which had been announced for fiscal 1992.

Based upon requests from the Soviets, the allocations under the package for purchases of U.S. wheat and wheat flour are now increased by \$45 million from \$207.5 million to \$252.5; feed grains (barley, corn, sorghum and oats) by \$150 million from \$937.7 million to \$1,087.7 million; protein meal by \$90 million from \$278.5 million to \$368.5 million.

Up to \$30 million of the \$315 million in guarantees will be provided for the freight component of the commodity sales made on C&F or C.I.F. basis.

USDA will provide GSM-102 coverage on credit extended for freight costs incurred in conjunction with export credit sales of any of the U.S. commodities in this allocation, where such costs are included in the "port value" of the commodity as defined under the program regulations. Exporters who apply for guarantees in connection with sales made on a C&F or C.I.F. basis must declare the estimated freight component of such sales. The CCC will maintain a tally of reported freight components and once that tally of freight costs reaches \$155 million, no additional guarantees in connection with sales made on a C&F or C.I.F. basis will be considered under this announcement. Exporters are reminded that neither freight nor insurance costs are eligible for guarantee coverage under the GSM-102 program where sales are made on "free-on-board" (F.O.B.) or "free alongside" (F.A.S.) vessel basis. All applications for guarantees are subject to price review.

U.S. exporters registering for credit guarantees must report to CCC the actual export period as provided in their credit sale. Exporters should not simply use the date listed in announcements authorizing the guarantee availability as the final export date.

Only those transactions with a date of sale after the date of this announcement will be eligible for coverage. All other terms and conditions previously announced remain the same.

For further information about GSM program operations, call (202) 447-3224. For 24-hour information on export credits activities, call (202) 472-1621.

Roger Runningen (202) 447-4623

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ENZYME COULD MAKE SUGAR NON-FATTENING

WASHINGTON, Aug. 27—A natural enzyme identified by a U.S. Department of Agriculture scientist can transform sugar into nonfattening food ingredients.

That enzyme could offer a sweet bonus to the beet and cane sugar industries if the converted sugar can be produced cheaply enough for use as noncaloric fillers, binders and extenders for food products.

Chemist Gregory L. Cote isolated and purified the enzyme, produced by the bacterium *Leuconostoc mesenteroides*, in his laboratory at the National Center for Agricultural Utilization Research at Peoria, Ill. Known as alphad-glucansucrase, the enzyme converts sugar to an alternan, a carbohydrate polymer.

Before alternans, chemically classed as dextrans, can be marketed for food applications, technologies for mass-producing them must be developed, says Cote, who works for USDA's Agricultural Research Service. Alternans also have to be tested for effects on animals and humans.

Cote has found strains of *L. mesenteroides* that produce dextrans that resist heat deterioration or are less sticky than those now commercially used.

Cote and his colleagues are screening a collection of bacteria for strains that make an alternan-producing enzyme in such pure form it won't have to be separated chemically from other enzymes. The added expense of chemical separation now prevents alternans from being a cost-effective choice for industry, Cote said.

The researchers also want to clone the gene responsible for producing alternan and to genetically engineer a microorganism to produce high yields of the enzyme, he said.

Further studies may lead to discovery of other strains of *L. mesenteroides* containing enzymes that work more efficiently than alphad-glucansucrase. Such enzymes might be isolated and adapted for continuous assembly-line production of dextrans. As these goals are achieved, Cote said, uses for economical dextrans could expand.

This was the case when scientists at the Peoria center conducted earlier research on dextrans that led to invention of a blood plasma extender used during the Korean conflict of the 1950s.

Cote said he had envisioned the new alternan as a substitute for the food ingredient gum arabic, but recently found it lacks emulsifying properties to keep food components from separating.

Researchers may still find a way to mix alternans with emulsifiers to

replace part of the 25 million pounds of gum arabic now imported into the United States each year from Sudan and other countries. Gum arabic costs \$1 to \$3 a pound.

Ben Hardin (309) 685-4011

#

MADIGAN APPOINTS MEMBERS TO NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR WIC AND CSFP

WASHINGTON, Aug. 27—Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan today appointed six new members to serve on the National Advisory Council on Maternal, Infant and Fetal Nutrition.

The 24-member council studies the operation of the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP). It reports biennially to the president and Congress on how the programs can be improved.

WIC and CSFP are administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service and provide essential food and nutrition counseling to the most vulnerable members of society.

New members appointed to three-year terms are: Luella Klein, M.D., obstetrician (Atlanta, Ga.); Christenia Reimann, local CSFP project director (Rockville Center, N.Y.); Vernice Davis Anthony, state health officer, (Lansing, Mich.); Stephen Schilling, representative of an organization serving migrants (Lamont, Calif.); Brenda Kirk, official from a state agency serving predominantly Indians, (Tahlequah, Okla.); and Sandra Syvertson, parent participant in the WIC Program, (Casper, Wyoming).

Council membership covers all aspects of program operations. Members are: USDA and Health and Human Services officials, WIC and CSFP state and local program operators, a state fiscal officer, medical and health representatives, a non-profit public interest organization representative, food retailers representative, special populations representatives, and WIC and CSFP parent participants.

Phil Shanholtzer (703) 756-3286

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